

§ 300h-2. Enforcement of program**(a) Notice to State and violator; issuance of administrative order; civil action**

(1) Whenever the Administrator finds during a period during which a State has primary enforcement responsibility for underground water sources (within the meaning of section 300h-1(b)(3) of this title or section 300h-4(c) of this title) that any person who is subject to a requirement of an applicable underground injection control program in such State is violating such requirement, he shall so notify the State and the person violating such requirement. If beyond the thirtieth day after the Administrator's notification the State has not commenced appropriate enforcement action, the Administrator shall issue an order under subsection (c) requiring the person to comply with such requirement or the Administrator shall commence a civil action under subsection (b).

(2) Whenever the Administrator finds during a period during which a State does not have primary enforcement responsibility for underground water sources that any person subject to any requirement of any applicable underground injection control program in such State is violating such requirement, the Administrator shall issue an order under subsection (c) requiring the person to comply with such requirement or the Administrator shall commence a civil action under subsection (b).

(b) Civil and criminal actions

Civil actions referred to in paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (a) shall be brought in the appropriate United States district court. Such court shall have jurisdiction to require compliance with any requirement of an applicable underground injection program or with an order issued under subsection (c). The court may enter such judgment as protection of public health may require. Any person who violates any requirement of an applicable underground injection control program or an order requiring compliance under subsection (c)—

(1) shall be subject to a civil penalty of not more than \$25,000 for each day of such violation, and

(2) if such violation is willful, such person may, in addition to or in lieu of the civil penalty authorized by paragraph (1), be imprisoned for not more than 3 years, or fined in accordance with title 18, or both.

(c) Administrative orders

(1) In any case in which the Administrator is authorized to bring a civil action under this section with respect to any regulation or other requirement of this part other than those relating to—

(A) the underground injection of brine or other fluids which are brought to the surface in connection with oil or natural gas production, or

(B) any underground injection for the secondary or tertiary recovery of oil or natural gas,

the Administrator may also issue an order under this subsection either assessing a civil penalty of not more than \$10,000 for each day of violation

for any past or current violation, up to a maximum administrative penalty of \$125,000, or requiring compliance with such regulation or other requirement, or both.

(2) In any case in which the Administrator is authorized to bring a civil action under this section with respect to any regulation, or other requirement of this part relating to—

(A) the underground injection of brine or other fluids which are brought to the surface in connection with oil or natural gas production, or

(B) any underground injection for the secondary or tertiary recovery of oil or natural gas,

the Administrator may also issue an order under this subsection either assessing a civil penalty of not more than \$5,000 for each day of violation for any past or current violation, up to a maximum administrative penalty of \$125,000, or requiring compliance with such regulation or other requirement, or both.

(3)(A) An order under this subsection shall be issued by the Administrator after opportunity (provided in accordance with this subparagraph) for a hearing. Before issuing the order, the Administrator shall give to the person to whom it is directed written notice of the Administrator's proposal to issue such order and the opportunity to request, within 30 days of the date the notice is received by such person, a hearing on the order. Such hearing shall not be subject to section 554 or 556 of title 5, but shall provide a reasonable opportunity to be heard and to present evidence.

(B) The Administrator shall provide public notice of, and reasonable opportunity to comment on, any proposed order.

(C) Any citizen who comments on any proposed order under subparagraph (B) shall be given notice of any hearing under this subsection and of any order. In any hearing held under subparagraph (A), such citizen shall have a reasonable opportunity to be heard and to present evidence.

(D) Any order issued under this subsection shall become effective 30 days following its issuance unless an appeal is taken pursuant to paragraph (6).

(4)(A) Any order issued under this subsection shall state with reasonable specificity the nature of the violation and may specify a reasonable time for compliance.

(B) In assessing any civil penalty under this subsection, the Administrator shall take into account appropriate factors, including (i) the seriousness of the violation; (ii) the economic benefit (if any) resulting from the violation; (iii) any history of such violations; (iv) any good-faith efforts to comply with the applicable requirements; (v) the economic impact of the penalty on the violator; and (vi) such other matters as justice may require.

(5) Any violation with respect to which the Administrator has commenced and is diligently prosecuting an action, or has issued an order under this subsection assessing a penalty, shall not be subject to an action under subsection (b) of this section or section 300h-3(c) or 300j-8 of this title, except that the foregoing limitation on civil actions under section 300j-8 of this title

shall not apply with respect to any violation for which—

(A) a civil action under section 300j-8(a)(1) of this title has been filed prior to commencement of an action under this subsection, or

(B) a notice of violation under section 300j-8(b)(1) of this title has been given before commencement of an action under this subsection and an action under section 300j-8(a)(1) of this title is filed before 120 days after such notice is given.

(6) Any person against whom an order is issued or who commented on a proposed order pursuant to paragraph (3) may file an appeal of such order with the United States District Court for the District of Columbia or the district in which the violation is alleged to have occurred. Such an appeal may only be filed within the 30-day period beginning on the date the order is issued. Appellant shall simultaneously send a copy of the appeal by certified mail to the Administrator and to the Attorney General. The Administrator shall promptly file in such court a certified copy of the record on which such order was imposed. The district court shall not set aside or remand such order unless there is not substantial evidence on the record, taken as a whole, to support the finding of a violation or, unless the Administrator's assessment of penalty or requirement for compliance constitutes an abuse of discretion. The district court shall not impose additional civil penalties for the same violation unless the Administrator's assessment of a penalty constitutes an abuse of discretion. Notwithstanding section 300j-7(a)(2) of this title, any order issued under paragraph (3) shall be subject to judicial review exclusively under this paragraph.

(7) If any person fails to pay an assessment of a civil penalty—

(A) after the order becomes effective under paragraph (3), or

(B) after a court, in an action brought under paragraph (6), has entered a final judgment in favor of the Administrator,

the Administrator may request the Attorney General to bring a civil action in an appropriate district court to recover the amount assessed (plus costs, attorneys' fees, and interest at currently prevailing rates from the date the order is effective or the date of such final judgment, as the case may be). In such an action, the validity, amount, and appropriateness of such penalty shall not be subject to review.

(8) The Administrator may, in connection with administrative proceedings under this subsection, issue subpoenas compelling the attendance and testimony of witnesses and subpoenas duces tecum, and may request the Attorney General to bring an action to enforce any subpoena under this section. The district courts shall have jurisdiction to enforce such subpoenas and impose sanction.

(d) State authority to adopt or enforce laws or regulations respecting underground injection unaffected

Nothing in this subchapter shall diminish any authority of a State or political subdivision to adopt or enforce any law or regulation respect-

ing underground injection but no such law or regulation shall relieve any person of any requirement otherwise applicable under this subchapter.

(July 1, 1944, ch. 373, title XIV, §1423, as added Pub. L. 93-523, §2(a), Dec. 16, 1974, 88 Stat. 1677; amended Pub. L. 96-502, §2(b), Dec. 5, 1980, 94 Stat. 2738; Pub. L. 99-339, title II, §202, June 19, 1986, 100 Stat. 654.)

AMENDMENTS

1986—Pub. L. 99-339, §202(d), substituted "Enforcement" for "Failure of State to assure enforcement" in section catchline.

Subsec. (a)(1). Pub. L. 99-339, §202(a)(1), substituted provisions which related to issuance of an order of compliance or commencement of a civil action by the Administrator if the State has not commenced enforcement against the violator for provisions directing the Administrator to give public notice and request that the State report within 15 days thereafter as to steps taken to enforce compliance and authorizing the Administrator to commence a civil action upon failure by the State to comply timely.

Subsec. (a)(2). Pub. L. 99-339, §202(a)(2), substituted provision that the Administrator issue an order under subsec. (c) of this section or commence a civil action under subsec. (b) of this section for provision that he commence a civil action under subsec. (b)(1) of this section.

Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 99-339, §202(b), amended subsec. (b) generally, substituting provisions relating to jurisdiction of the appropriate Federal district court, entry of judgment, civil penalty of \$25,000 per day, criminal liability and fine for willful violation for provisions which related to judicial determinations in appropriate Federal district courts, civil penalties of \$5,000 per day, and fines of \$10,000 per day for willful violations.

Subsecs. (c), (d). Pub. L. 99-339, §202(c), added subsec. (c) and redesignated former subsec. (c) as (d).

1980—Subsec. (a)(1). Pub. L. 96-502 inserted reference to section 300h-4(c) of this title.

§ 300h-3. Interim regulation of underground injections

(a) Necessity for well operation permit; designation of one aquifer areas

(1) Any person may petition the Administrator to have an area of a State (or States) designated as an area in which no new underground injection well may be operated during the period beginning on the date of the designation and ending on the date on which the applicable underground injection control program covering such area takes effect unless a permit for the operation of such well has been issued by the Administrator under subsection (b). The Administrator may so designate an area within a State if he finds that the area has one aquifer which is the sole or principal drinking water source for the area and which, if contaminated, would create a significant hazard to public health.

(2) Upon receipt of a petition under paragraph (1) of this subsection, the Administrator shall publish it in the Federal Register and shall provide an opportunity to interested persons to submit written data, views, or arguments thereon. Not later than the 30th day following the date of the publication of a petition under this paragraph in the Federal Register, the Administrator shall either make the designation for which the petition is submitted or deny the petition.